REMARKS

ON THE

Defence of the Plea for Human Reaſon, &c.

By the AUTHOR of

The Plea for Divine Revelation.

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THERE having lately appeared a Pamphlet of near a hundred Pages, in Defence of *The Plea for Human Reaſon*, and in Reply to *The Plea for Divine Revelation*, it may be thought proper, if not neceſſary, that I ſhould take ſome notice of it; which I ſhall therefore do, in ſome curſory Remarks, and in as few Words as poſſible.

One Reaſon for this brevity is, that I am apprehenſive, that the Author of the *Defence*, who appears to be ſo thoroughly verſed in the Writings of the ancient

Heathen Philoſophers, has by him large Extracts from them, ſhewing the Demonſtrations they have given us of all the Parts of true Morality, and thoſe other Parts of Religion in general, which are concerned in this Diſpute; and that he keeps this great Book in *petto*; ſince he confidently affirms (Introd. p. 6.) that he will undertake to prove demonſtrably from them *every Precept of true Religion, which I can prove from the Scriptures.* And when the great Book comes, I will then follow him Step by Step; if my Leiſure will permit, and the Importance of the Thing ſhall appear to require it.

In the mean Time, in order to make theſe Remarks as ſhort as may be, and ſpare the Reader the trouble of frequent Repetitions, I deſire he would pleaſe to remember the following Particulars.

1. That the Author of *The Plea for Divine Revelation* has not ſaid one Word that impeaches or contradicts the Moral Attributes of God; and That the Inferences of that kind which are drawn in this Defence, are neither acknowledged,

ledged, not ſeen by him; who hopes his Veneration for the Supreme Being will always keep him from treating any of the Divine Attributes with ſo much Freedom, or explaining them in ſo looſe, *not to ſay prophane*, a manner; as he apprehends this Gentleman will appear to have treated numberleſs Paſſages, in the Sacred Books of the New Teſtament.

2dly. That the Author of *The Plea for Divine Revelation* has no where aſſerted, or inſinuated, that invincible Ignorance will not excuſe from Guilt, or that God will condemn any Man for Crimes which he could not know to be ſuch; but the contrary: and That therefore all Reflections thrown, or Conſequences charged upon him, on that Suppoſition, (as Introd. p. 13. Def. 34, 35.) are groundleſs and unjuſt. And

3dly. That the Author of *The Plea for Divine Revelation*, has no where denied, either the demonſtrative Evidence, which may now be given of many Moral Truths, or the neceſſity of good Works under the Goſpel;

Goſpel; and conſequently all the Pains taken to prove either (as Def. p. 35, 36.) is ſo much Labour loſt; and all the Reflections made on the contrary Suppoſition, are injurious. And That therefore, to uſe the Words of my Lord Biſhop of *London*, (Second Paſt. Let. p. 9.) *it is unfair to repreſent the Zeal he may have ſhewn for Revealed Religion, as a Diſregard to Morality*; which he is ſo far from being guilty of, that *he always conſiders the whole Body of the Moral Law, as an eſſential Part of the Chriſtian Inſtitution; which*, he is perſuaded, *is ſo far from having aboliſhed Morality, that it enjoins and enforces the Practice of it, upon higher Motives, more noble Ends, and to greater Degrees of Perfection, than any Scheme of mere Morality ever did.*

This being premiſed, we proceed to *The Introduction*; which, after a partial Recapitulation of near five Pages, does chiefly conſiſt of a pretended Explanation of *the Difference between natural and reveal'd Religion*; charitably deſign'd, it ſeems, *to remove my great Ignorance of thoſe Mat-*

ters,

ters, pag. 14; and ſo far as that was really the Deſign, I readily acknowledge the Obligation. And there is another Thing for which I ſincerely thank this Gentleman, let his Deſign in it have been what it would; and that is, his joining me continually with that great Defender and Support of the Chriſtian Faith among us, the Lord Biſhop of *London*, in the ſame Sentiments and Reproaches. It is to my Honour, and will always be juſt Matter of Glory, to have been thus united, and thus abuſed, (Introd. p. 13, &c.)

What juſt Provocation his Lordſhip has given this Gentleman, to debaſe him ſo far as to put him, in any reſpect, upon a Level with me, I am at a Loſs to find out; unleſs it be, that his Lordſhip will not vouchſafe him an Anſwer. A Matter indeed of a very ſtimulating Nature to Men of ſtrong Paſſions, or exalted Minds; but which, one would think, could very little affect a Man of this Gentleman's Coolneſs and Humility. And I doubt not, but when he has ſeriouſly conſider'd the Caſe, he will agree with me

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in the following Opinion, tho' we differ in every thing elſe. And that is, That to write *Paſtoral Letters* to the People of a large Dioceſs, to guard them againſt the ſpreading Contagion of Hereſy and Infidelity, is indeed, in itſelf, worthy of the Office, Character, and Dignity, of a Chriſtian Biſhop; and That to write them in the manner, in which two have been written, which both this Gentleman and I have ſeen, is worthy of the Writer's eminent Station in the Church, and of the ableſt Pen. But That to neglect or poſtpone the moſt important Affairs, in order to turn Pamphleteer, and anſwer the Cavils of every Writer which ſhall appear againſt him; is not ſeriouſly to be expected from a wiſe Man, who has ſuch important Affairs on his Hands. It may well be imagined, that ſuch Authors as we, who may hope to raiſe our Reputation by the Eminence of our Adverſaries, would be glad of ſuch Honour; but I am afraid, if we judge right, we have little Reaſon to expect it: And for my own Part, I think, I have Reaſon to re-

joice, that I have already had one Favour of that kind, and may hope for another. But to return,

Though thankful for the Deſign of this *Introduction*, if ſuch it really was; yet, I muſt confeſs, I am not much the wiſer for all this learned Pains; nor can I agree with what this Gentleman here advances, for theſe, among many other, Reaſons.

1. Becauſe I don't well underſtand what is meant by *an abſolute unlimited Inſufficiency*; an abſolute unlimited Negative is to me little better than abſolute unlimited Nonſenſe. Beſides, the Inſufficiency of Reaſon is limited by the Author of the *Plea for Revelation*, to ſome Particulars there ſpecified, *p.* 4.

2. Becauſe I don't underſtand how *that great* ARTICLE OF FAITH *which the Apoſtle preached, was*, That *Men ſhould turn from their Vanities to the Living God*, p. vii. It ſeems hard to ſay, That this was any *Article of Faith* at all; or if the greateſt, I cannot but think it neceſſary, to inſiſt, that *to believe in our Lord Jeſus Chriſt*, ought at leaſt to be made a Part of that

Faith; and that it is inexcuſable in a *Chriſtian* Writer, to leave HIM wholly out, even in the ſhorteſt Summary of Chriſtianity.

3. Becauſe I am at a Loſs to find out how Chriſtianity *can render human Nature* NATURALLY CAPABLE *of greater Happineſs or Rewards than it would be able to attain any other Way.* (Introd. p. 11.) Are the Means Chriſtianity offers to promote Piety *natural* Means? If ſo indeed, there is an End of the Diſpute. *Natural* and *Supernatural*, or *Natural* and *Revealed*, are ſynonymous Terms; and Chriſtianity is indeed *no new Religion*, but *as old as the Creation*, as our Author aſſerts, in the next Page.

Or, if this Gentleman means by this Expreſſion, not that the *Means* whereby Chriſtianity does this are *natural Means*; but only that the Capacity attained is a *natural Capacity*. This Aſſertion then is in this Senſe as abſurd in Point of Reaſon, as the other Senſe is in Point of Religion. For whatever Improvement it may receive in its *natural State*, that, I ſhould think,

think, it muſt be *naturally capable of*; and to RENDER it *naturally capable of greater Happineſs*, muſt import, if it imports any thing, that it was *not capable* of it before. And yet how *a natural Capacity*, or Being *naturally capable*, ſhould be *new* produced in Men without *changing their Nature*, I do not underſtand. The Happineſs the Chriſtian Religion propoſes, requires ſomething ſupernatural, not only to entitle a Man to it, but to render him capable of enjoying it; and that is the Reſurrection.

4. Becauſe I cannot eaſily conceive, how *the worſhipping God by a Mediator and by expiatory Sacrifices*, comes to be a Part of Natural Religion; if by that Religion is meant ſuch a one as unaſſiſted Reaſon would teach: and yet much leſs can I apprehend, how it comes to be *ſuitable to the* NATURAL INSTINCT AND DICTATES *of human Nature*, p. 10. And when the great Book comes, I ſhall be glad to be informed, how the ancient Heathen did, or could, prove the ſacrificing of Beaſts to be a *reaſonable* Part of Duty, and upon what ſolid Grounds they founded

the Practice. That it was ſo far *agreeable to the univerſal Sentiments of the wiſeſt and moſt rational Heathen*, (Introd. p. 9.) as that they joined in ſuch Worſhip; tho' not to One God Only, as this Author ſeems to ſuggeſt, but to numberleſs Deities of their own making; and with Ceremonies too horrid and abominable *to be once named among Chriſtians*; my little reading does ſufficiently inform me. But how this was a Proof of their *Wiſdom* or *Reaſon*, is ſomewhat dark and myſterious to me. I am ſimple enough to think it as clear as any Demonſtration in *Euclid*, that there is nothing *in the Nature of the Thing* that can induce any wiſe Man to believe, That the God of Nature could be pleaſed with ſpilling the Blood of a Beaſt; and yet much leſs, That ſuch Blood ſpilt could waſh away the Sin of a Man. And the Author of the Epiſtle to the *Hebrews* teaches me, that *it is not poſſible that the Blood of Bulls and of Goats ſhould take away Sin*, Heb. x. 4. Which, I preſume, may ſcreen my Opinion from the Cenſure of this Author, tho' not from that of

the ingenious Author of *Chriſtianity as old as the Creation.*

There is indeed one Way, by which, I think, I could both account for the Univerſality of the Practice, and ſhew the Uſefulneſs and Reaſonableneſs of it: which is, the ſuppoſing it to have been originally inſtituted by God himſelf, with a View to, and in order to keep up a continual Expectation of, the great Sacrifice of the Death of his eternal Son; and in order thereby to prepare the World for the more ready Reception of ſo ſtrange a Doctrine, as that of Redemption through his Blood, when he ſhould come and ſuffer for Mankind. But this, I preſume, would be cenſured, as *a ridiculous, not to ſay prophane, Pretence to Orthodoxy:* (Introd. p. 5.) and as it muſt be confeſſed, that the wiſeſt Heathen could not have found out this of themſelves, I ſhall be glad to be informed, for what *good Reaſons* they joined in offering ſuch Sacrifices.

And till ſuch time as this Proof appears, I muſt inſiſt on this very Practice, as one Inſtance of the Truth of what I aſ-

I aſſerted, and which I am loudly called upon to prove, *Defence*, *p.* 72; I ſay, I muſt inſiſt on this as one undeniable Proof that the Heathen *charged their Wickedneſs upon their Guide itſelf, and contended that their Reaſon taught and approved it:* That is, they practiſed many Things, (which every Chriſtian will allow to have been *wicked* and abominable) *as reaſonable Parts of Duty*, and undertook *to prove them ſuch by their Reaſon*; which was what I meant by that Expreſſion. Thus *Epictetus* himſelf, Ch. 28. the Author of the *Pythagorean* Verſes, *Iſocrates*, *Tully*, and almoſt all their Writers, teach it as a reaſonable and univerſal Rule, that with regard to publick Worſhip, *the Cuſtom of every Country*, and not the Reaſon and Nature of Things, was the Rule of every Man's Duty. When at the ſame time, they could not but know, what thoſe Cuſtoms were; and I hope this Gentleman will allow that they were, generally ſpeaking, execrable in themſelves, accompanied with the moſt ſhocking Pollutions, and practiſed not in Honour

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to the Maker of Heaven and Earth, (p. 7.) but *to Wood and Stone, the Work of Men's Hands*, or to Adulterers and Robbers, whom they themſelves had deified.

This Gentleman muſt likewiſe excuſe me, if I have ſtill another Difficulty with regard to this Matter; and that is, how to reconcile him to himſelf. Notwithſtanding what he aſſerts here in the *Introduction*, of the *Agreeableneſs of Sacrifices to the univerſal Sentiments of the wiſeſt and moſt rational Heathen*; (which I can no otherwiſe underſtand than of that ſort of Sacrifices, and that Manner of offering them, which they themſelves uſed) He affirms, Def. p. 13. that *all the virtuous Heathens agreed, that God was* ONLY PROPERLY TO BE WORSHIPPED, *by Piety and Rectitude of Will and Affections.* If they agreed, *That God could only properly be worſhipped by Piety and Rectitude of Will and Affections*, how could the Sacrificing of Beaſts, as practiſed by them, *be agreeable to the univerſal Sentiments of the wiſeſt and moſt rational of them?* Whether theſe Propoſitions are,

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or ought to be called contradictory, I leave to the Reader's Determination; and desire him likewise to find a Name for this Gentleman's constant Practice of speaking of God, and the Divine Nature in the Singular, whenever he mentions the Religion and Worship of the Heathen, or their Notions of their Gods; as if they had been as uniform in the Doctrine of the Unity of God, and in addressing their Worship to him alone, as we are at this Day. And,

5thly, and *lastly*, Because I can by no Means assent to this Gentleman's Doctrine, concerning the Nature of our blessed Lord's Atonement, and the Efficacy of good Works consider'd in themselves to Salvation. His Account of the former is this; *That our Lord Jesus Christ is the Author of Salvation*, BY BEING THE INSTRUMENT OF CONVEYING THE MEANS OF IT TO US; and that *his voluntary dying* IN TESTIMONY OF THE TRUTH OF HIS MISSION AND DOCTRINE, *was* INSTEAD OF *all other Sacrifices, and* AN ASSURANCE *that God requires no Atonement of us, but Repentance*

pentance and Newneſs of Life, Introd. p. 10. And again, leſt this ſhould be miſunderſtood, he adds, p. 16. *That Chriſt's Blood, the only accepted univerſal Sacrifice for Sin, is ſet forth in the Scripture*, AS A SIGN TO ASSURE US *that Obedience to the Goſpel*, WHICH HE CONFIRMED BY IT, *ſhall be accepted and rewarded*; and again, leſt I ſhould miſtake what he means by *the accepted Sacrifice*, he adds, (p. 17.) *That the Atonement of Chriſt was deſigned* ONLY TO DECLARE GOD'S GOODNESS, *as freely pardoning Sin without the Puniſhment of the Sinner.* And can this Gentleman be really a Chriſtian, and teach this Doctrine? Was there nothing more in our great Redeemer's Death, than *a Sign* to *aſſure us* of God's Goodneſs? Was there in it no *Merit* properly ſo called? No *Satisfaction* made to Divine Juſtice for Sin? No *Redemption*, in the ſtrict and proper Senſe of the Word, from the Guilt and Puniſhment of Sin? No *Price* paid *for us*? No true *Expiation* made? Was that precious Blood which *has taken away the Sins of the World*, ſpilt only *in Teſtimony*

of the Truth of our Lord's Miſſion and Doctrine; which Teſtimony the Apoſtles gave, as well as *the Lord of Life?* Was his Atonement *only declarative* of the Goodneſs of God? What then becomes of the Epiſtle to the *Hebrews*, and indeed the whole Goſpel? This is a Language, ſo directly oppoſite to the Sacred Writers, of the New Teſtament; and there are ſuch numberleſs Paſſages, in that Holy Book, point blank againſt it; that it were an Inſult on the Underſtanding of every Chriſtian Reader, who has that ſacred Book in his Hands, to attempt to diſprove it. Beſides; How, or in what Senſe is a DECLARATION of the *Goodneſs of God*, or a SIGN *to aſſure us of it*, an ATONEMENT? Or how is ſuch a *Declaration*, or *Sign*, to be INSTEAD OF ALL OTHER SACRIFICES? Were other Sacrifices, *Signs* or *Declarations of God's Goodneſs, and our Acceptance?* But there will be no End of aſking ſuch hard Queſtions; if we ſtop at every Perplexity of Stile, and Darkneſs of Expreſſion, which this Pamphlet affords us.

Again,

Again, this Gentleman's Account of good Works, conſider'd in themſelves, is this; p. 17. *That* THE EFFICACY *of Chriſt's Blood is* FOUNDED *on precedent good Works, and is nothing without them*; and *That they are never ſuppoſed* TO WANT ANY THING *to render them acceptable to God.* How much this improves upon the Popiſh Doctrine of the Merit of good Works, I will not at preſent conſider; but I cannot help obſerving, that St. *Paul* inſtructs his Son *Titus* in a very different Manner. He tells him, (iii. 5, 6, 7.) *That after the Kindneſs and Love of God our Saviour towards Man appeared, He ſaved us* NOT BY WORKS OF RIGHTEOUSNESS WHICH WE HAVE DONE, *but* ACCORDING TO HIS MERCY, *by the waſhing of Regeneration and renewing of the Holy Ghoſt, which he ſhed on us abundantly through Jeſus Chriſt our Lord*; *that* BEING JUSTIFIED BY HIS GRACE, *we ſhould be made Heirs according to the Hope of eternal Life.* And the ſame Apoſtle teaches his *Epheſians*, (ii. 8, 13.) *That they were ſaved* BY GRACE THROUGH FAITH, *and*

that NOT OF THEMSELVES, *it was the* GIFT *of God*; NOT OF WORKS, *leſt any Man ſhould boaſt*; *for they were* HIS WORKMANSHIP, *created in Chriſt Jeſus unto good Works:* And that the *Gentiles*, who by being *without Chriſt had been Strangers from the Covenant of Promiſe*, HAVING NO HOPE, AND WITHOUT GOD IN THE WORLD, That *they*, I ſay, *who had been* thus *far off*, *were brought nigh*; but by what? By the Efficacy of their own good Works, which *wanted nothing to render them acceptable to God?* No; but BY THE BLOOD OF CHRIST.

So contrary is the Doctrine of the great Apoſtle of the *Gentiles* to that which this Gentleman ſends me for my Edification. And indeed I don't wonder that unlearned Men ſhould apprehend, that this Conſequence does neceſſarily follow from the Premiſes, which this Author has laid down. This is the *Tendency*, the *natural Tendency* of ſuch Principles. The Doctrine of the abſolute Sufficiency of Reaſon in itſelf to the Divine Favour and Acceptance, in the uſual Meaning

and

and Latitude of the Expreſſion, or in other Words, to Happineſs or Salvation, does ſurely ſo far imply the Sufficiency of good Works, built only on that Reaſon; as to exclude all foreign Aid whatſoever, as not at all neceſſary, either to recommend thoſe who perform ſuch good Works to God, or to entitle them to all the Bliſs of which their Natures are capable, or which He can beſtow upon them. But it is indeed Matter of Admiration, That a Gentleman who has *a Chriſtian Concern for true Religion*, (p. 10.) and writes *to do Service to reveal'd Religion*, Introd. p. 3; and That an Author, who may well be ſuppoſed *not* to write *without ſufficient Reading and Thinking*, Def. p. 85; it is, I ſay, ſomewhat ſtrange, That ſuch a Friend to Revelation, and ſo very accurate a Writer, ſhould not ſee, That peremptorily to inſiſt on the ſufficiency of good Works in themſelves, and in a State of Nature, and excluſive of all Regards to the great Atonement, is, in effect, totally to over-turn the whole Chriſtian Scheme, and ſtriking out the whole

New Teſtament with one Daſh of a Pen.

And before I leave this Subject, I muſt likewiſe refer this Gentleman to the ſame great Apoſtle for the Grounds upon which I affirmed, *Plea for Revelat.* p. 68. That *I cannot impute the Acceptance of the virtuous Heathen, either to the Sufficiency of their Guide,* &c. *but to the meritorious Blood of the Lamb of God, which was ſhed to take away the Sins of the World.* Our Author triumphs at this Ignorance; and ſeems to think it a monſtrous Abſurdity, that their Acceptance ſhould be grounded on that Atonement, *which they had no Knowledge, or ſenſible Evidence of.* But I muſt confeſs, I can ſee no Abſurdity in believing, that a Ranſom may be paid for the Redemption of a Slave, without the Captive's Knowledge; and that he may finally receive the Benefit of that Ranſom, without knowing any Thing, either of him that has paid it, or of the Ranſom itſelf, 'till he comes to be declared free, by his Maſter, and his Judge. And St. *Paul* expreſly

expreſly tells us, That, *as in Adam all die, even ſo in Chriſt ſhall all be made alive*; and That, *as was the Offence of Adam, ſo alſo was the free Gift of Chriſt*; the one altogether as general or univerſal, and more beneficial, than the other was prejudicial, to Mankind. And unleſs, therefore, this Gentleman can exclude the virtuous Heathen from the *Condemnation of Death*; he muſt include them, (if they are accepted) *in the Juſtification unto Life.* To which I muſt add, That if this Gentleman ſuggeſts, p. 14. or apprehends, That I have declared *that precious Blood to be* THE SOLE GROUND *of Acceptance with God* ſo as to exclude the Neceſſity of good Works, he miſunderſtands, or miſrepreſents me. I have no where call'd it *the ſole Ground*, or indeed any Ground at all. All I contend for is, That neither Reaſon, nor good Works, are ſufficient without the bleſſed *Jeſus*; whoſe Atonement muſt be brought into the Account, or all will fail of Succeſs: which is contrary indeed to the new Doctrine ſent me by this Gentleman; but, I conceive, very

agreeable

agreeable to the whole Tenor of the Goſpel. Which being conſider'd, I leave it *ſub judice*, who *has betrayed the greateſt Ignorance of natural and reveal'd Religion.* Thus much for the Introduction.

We come now to the *Defence* itſelf, which ſets out with an aukward Apology for the *ingenious* (p. 3.) Author of *Chriſtianity as Old as the Creation*; who has burleſqued the whole Bible from one end to the other, and whoſe profeſſed Deſign is to root out the very Foundations of Chriſtianity. But our more ingenious Author, before he can convince the World that that Writer is the poor miſtaken innocent Thing which he ſeems here to repreſent him, muſt in his *Remarks*, firſt diſprove what has been ſaid by the Author of *The Letter to Dr.* Waterland, p. 48-57; who undertakes to ſhew, that *the whole Scheme* of that ingenious Man is, *even upon his own Principles, both irrational and immoral:* and who has ſo far ſucceeded in the Attempt, that I believe moſt impartial Readers will, if they conſider what is there offered, retain but very

very indifferent Sentiments, either of his Ingenuity or Honesty; at least 'till his Apologist clears him from the Imputation.

After this, from p. 4, to 12, we have sundry Remarks of divers kinds, which may be passed over without any great loss to the Reader; because the Author does not seem to understand what was meant by this plain Truth, That *the Testimony and Authority of God are greater than those of Men*; and because the main Point labour'd, p. 5-9, *viz.* Necessity of Piety and good Works in a Christian, is so much Labour lost; in as much as it is proving what nobody has denied. But at p. 12. we come to the Point; and our Author proves, in two Pages, that, in fact, the Reason of the antient Heathen was *not insufficient* in any of the Points alledged, *Plea for Revelat.* p. 5. The Thing is no sooner said than done. One Quotation from *Seneca* the Philosopher, another from *Persius* the Poet, and half a dozen from the Emperor *Antoninus*, demonstrate the whole at once, as plainly as the Sun appears in the Firmament, at Noon-day.

Which, I own, increaſes my Suſpicion that there is ſome Snake in the Graſs; eſpecially ſince not one of theſe Quotations is applied by its Author to the One True God (to whom our Author muſt apply them, or they are nothing to his Purpoſe) but to the various Gods and Goddeſſes worſhipped by the Heathen. And I therefore think it only common Prudence, to keep likewiſe *a Corps* in Reſerve, 'till that of my Antagoniſt appears.

But nevertheleſs, in order partly to ſhew my own Learning, and partly for this Gentleman's Information in the mean time; I will venture to ſay a Word or two, of thoſe Sentiments concerning *the Immortality of the Soul, and a future State of Rewards and Puniſhments*, which we may ſuppoſe to have been entertained, by theſe boaſted Heroes in Paganiſm; who, as our Author aſſerts, *have taught every Duty relating to God, our Neighbour, or Ourſelves, which the Goſpel commands*; and from whom he is to prove EVERY PRECEPT OF TRUE RELIGION, GODLINESS, AND MORALITY WHICH CAN BE PRODUCED FROM REVELATION, Introd. p. 6. *Epictetus*

Epictetus ſays not one Word of either of theſe Doctrines, (without which there can be no true Religion) throughout his whole *Enchiridion*; and our Author allows, that *he can find nothing in him about a future State*, p. 85; tho' his Subject ſo often led him very ſtrongly to mention both, that it is ſcarce to be imagined he could have omitted them, if he had believed them; and tho' he liv'd late enough to have receiv'd this Light from the Chriſtian Revelation, if he had ſought for it, or would have embraced it.

Plato's Reaſons for the Immortality, in his *Phædo*, are ſuch, as I believe would ſcarce convince any conſiderate Reader of the Reality of it, if he had not other and better Foundations to build it upon: and indeed, *Simmias*'s Words, *That to come at a Certainty of that Doctrine in this Life is extremely difficult, if not impoſſible*[a], *unleſs Men could come at ſome Revelation to aſcertain it to them*[b], ſeem

[a] Τὸ μὲν σαφὲς εὑρεῖν ἐν τῷ νῦν βίῳ, ἢ ἀδύνατον ἶναι, ἢ πάνυ χαλεπόν τι. Op. Franc. 1602. p. 64.

[b] Εἰ μή τις δύναιτο ἀσφαλέστερον καὶ ἀκινδυνότερον, ἐπὶ βεβαιοτέρου ὀχήματος ἢ ΛΟΓΟΥ ΘΕΙΟΥ ΤΙΝΟΣ διαπορευθῆναι, Ibid.

after all his fine Sayings, to contain the Author's own Sentiments concerning it. At leaſt it was the learned *Gataker*'s Opinion[c], That *the doubting Reader, who reads in ſearch of Truth, would find very little Solidity in* Plato *to remove his Doubts*; and *Tully*[d] is expreſs, That *nothing certain* can *be collected from him.*

Seneca ſays, [e] That *the Souls of thoſe which ſhall be for ever* (Æterna ſortitæ) *happy in another State, ſhall, after ſome Time,* BE DISSOLVED AND TURNED INTO THEIR ORIGINAL ELEMENTS.

[c] In dialogis pleriſque (ſcil. Platonis) per anfractuoſas diſputationum ambages, artificio ſingulari ſibi invicem implicatas & innexas, in immenſum ferme protracta diſſertationis ſerie, veri certique ſitiens Lector, niſi quod dictionis amœnitate, inventionis varietate, ſtructuræque elegantia, quæ feſſum interim reficiant, dum delinitur detinetur, logis longis ac laciniosis pæne delaſſatus, *cum quod pro certo ſtatuatur nihil occurrat in quo pedem figat, nec jam animi pendens, opinatione dubitationeque omni depoſita, firmus conſiſtat, ac ſecurus acquieſcat,* vix ac ni vix quidem deprehendere queat. Præl. in M. Ant.

[d] Platonis in libris *nihil affirmatur*; & dum in utramque partem multa diſſeruntur, de omnibus quæritur, *nihil certi dicitur.* Acad. lib. 1.

[e] Nos quoque felices animæ & *æterna ſortitæ*, cum Deo viſum erit, iterum iſta moliri labentibus cunctis, *& ipſi*, parva ruinæ ingentis acceſſio, *in antiqua elementa vertemur.* Ad Marc. c. 26. *Marcus*

Marcus Antoninus, tho' he lived to the latter Part of the ſecond Century, and might eaſily have been better inſtructed by the Goſpel, if he had not laid too much ſtreſs on the Sufficiency of his Reaſon to think he wanted Inſtruction; He, I ſay, expreſly teaches, That *the Soul is material*[f] *like the Body*; That *as the latter, upon its Separation, returns to the Earth, ſo does the former to the Air; and will, after ſome Time, be changed, poured out, and united, and received, into the ſpermatick Principle of all Things*: and That *as the Corruption of ſome Bodies in the Earth makes room for the Reception of other Bodies into the ſame Place, ſo will this Change of Souls do for other Souls.* And B. 6. c. 24. He ſays, That, *after their Death*, Alexander *the Great, and his Mule-driver were brought upon a Level*; that is, as he ex-

[f] Εἰ διαμένουσιν αἱ ψυχαὶ, πῶς αὐτὰς ἐξ ἀϊδίου χωρεῖ ὁ ἀὴρ; πῶς δὲ ἡ γῆ χωρεῖ τὰ ἐκ τοσούτου αἰῶνος θαπτόμενα σώματα; ὥσπερ γὰρ ἐνθάδε, ἡ τούτων μετάβολή τε καὶ διάλυσις χώραν ἄλλοις νεκροῖς ποιεῖ· οὕτως αἱ εἰς τὸν ἀέρα μετὰ τὸ διαμένειν ψυχαὶ ἐπὶ ποσὸν συμμονάσασαι, μεταβάλλουσι, καὶ χέονται, καὶ ἐξαπλοῦνται εἰς τὸ ὅλον σπερματικὸν λόγον ἀναλαμβανόμεναι, καὶ τοῦτον τὸν τρόπον χώραν ταῖς προσνεικιζομέναις παρίχουσι. Lib 4. c. 21.

plains

plains himſelf, *Their Souls were, either received into*, or *ſwallowed up in*, what he calls, *The ſeminal Logos of the World, or were diſperſed in Atoms.*

And laſtly, with regard to *Tully*, the Paſſage quoted from him, does indeed prove, as our Author obſerves, That he did allow of *the* [g] *Continuance* of the Soul, for ſome Time, in a future State; but this has little to do with what we mean by *its Immortality*; and if our Author had looked a little further in the ſame Book, he would have found, that *Tully* himſelf could not tell what to make of this *State of Exiſtence*, or what Account to give [h] of it. He rejects the received Opinions as fabulous; but does not, with all his Reaſon, pretend to give us the true one. Wonderful Sagacity! to find out in theſe Writers, *every Precept of true Religion, which can be produced from Revelation!* But to return.

[g] *Permanere* animos arbitramur. Tuſc. Qu. Lib. 1.

[h] Qua in ſede maneant, qualeſque ſint ratione diſcendum eſt; cujus ignorantia finxit inferos ejuſque formidines, quas tu contemnere non ſine cauſa videbare. Ibid.

The

The want of Authority in any one Man to impoſe his Dictates on other Men as the Rule of their Life, having been inſiſted on, as one Inſtance of *the Inſufficiency of Reaſon in itſelf*, our Author comes to tell us, p. 15, that there was no want of ſuch Authority, *becauſe the Authority to impoſe theſe Sentiments and Dictates is their being of eternal and immutable Obligation, and demonſtratively agreeable to the Nature and Will of God.* But what ſhall they do, who don't, or cannot, ſee this Obligation; and who alone properly want the Weight of Authority to guide them? Why, they muſt believe thoſe that do, upon their Words. That is, they muſt firſt take the Thing for granted, and then they will find Reaſon to ſubmit to the Authority of their Teachers: Or in other Words, the beſt way to prove the Thing, is to take it for granted that it is true. Or, if the Impoſer, on the other Hand, is to judge, whether *theſe Sentiments be of eternal and immutable Obligation, or not*; and his Judgment gives him *Authority to impoſe them*

upon others; what becomes of the private Judgment of the reſt of Mankind? Or what can ſuch an *Authority to impoſe* mean, but a Power to make uſe of Force, if nothing leſs will do? So that this Doctrine, if fairly purſued, muſt end, I fear, in a Spirit of Perſecution; which, I flatter myſelf, our Author ſincerely abhors.

In p. 17. I am charged with a miſrepreſentation in Relation to the two following Propoſitions;

One is, That *Human Reaſon cannot make certain to Men the Pardon of Sin, without any Puniſhment of the Sinner.*

The other, That *Reaſon cannot of itſelf inform Men how to appeaſe the Anger of Almighty God, when once they have tranſgreſſed his Commandments.*

The firſt of theſe is our Author's Aſſertion; the other my Lord of *London's*; and I was ſtupid enough to think the former, (together with another Paſſage explanatory of it[1], which this Gentleman is ſo ingenious as to leave out) amounted to an Agreement in Senſe with the latter.

[1] Vid. Pl. for Rev. p. 7.

Whereas

Whereas I am here told, that the former Propoſition ſuppoſes, *That Men* DID KNOW, OR MIGHT HAVE KNOWN, *by the Light of Nature, how to appeaſe God; and* MIGHT BE CERTAIN, *that God would be appeaſed upon their Repentance and newneſs of Life.* And my Miſtake, it ſeems, was, that I did not underſtand the little Word ANY, which was meant of *any Puniſhment of the Sinner as a precedent Ground of God's Reconciliation, and of their ſpiritual future Happineſs*, p. 18. and this our Author here again aſſerts, *could not by mere Reaſon certainly be found out.* So that when he ſaid, *Reaſon could not make certain to Men the Pardon of Sin without any Puniſhment of the Sinner*, his Meaning was, That it *could make this Pardon certain to them, but not without ſome Puniſhment*; and my Lord of *London* is referr'd to the *Platonick* Notions of a purgatorial Fire to give him a clear Apprehenſion of this Matter. But for my Part, I muſt confeſs, that whatever his Lordſhip may think of it, I really cannot ſee any Senſe or Reaſon in theſe two

Pages; and ſhould as ſoon expect to be in a real Purgatory without feeling any Pain, as imagine that the Words *without Puniſhment*, or *without any Puniſhment*, ſhould ſignify *with ſome Puniſhment*; or that *cannot make certain* ſhould import *can make certain.*

We come now, p. 22. to our Author's great Veneration for my Lord of *London, to whoſe Perſon and Character, he hopes, he has a due Regard*; which, I preſume, no body will diſpute with him, after what he has ſaid and done. But I muſt confeſs, I cannot help thinking it a very ſingular Way of ſhewing that Regard, in a Gentleman *who knows how to be civil in his Expreſſions*; (p. 76.) to inſinuate in ſuch plain Terms, as every Reader muſt underſtand, that his Lordſhip is one of *thoſe Chriſtian Profeſſors of the higheſt Dignity in the Church*, WHO SEEK THEIR OWN THINGS DAILY MORE THAN THE THINGS OF JESUS CHRIST, and of thoſe *Chriſtians of Learning, Rank, and Dignity among us*, WHO ARE GREAT LOVERS OF THE WORLD, AND COMPLY WITH

WITH THE WICKED POLITICKS OF IT. Eſpecially, ſince he has taken Care to tack *Paſtoral Letters* to the End of that pretty Satyr, leſt the Reader ſhould happen not to include his Lordſhip in the Application.

In p. 23. The little Word *any* riſes up once more in Judgment againſt me; and I aſſure this Gentleman I did not inſert it with any malevolent Intentions. My Deſign was only to uſe it as ſynonymous to *a*; and if he likes one Letter better than three, I will not diſpute the Frugality with him; eſpecially ſince the force of the Argument is not at all affected by the Change.

From hence to p. 31, we have various Arguments brought againſt me, of various Kinds; one of the chief of which is, That *Reaſon, in itſelf, conſider'd as the only Guide, &c. is ſufficient, is as demonſtrable as any Propoſition in Euclid, and for the Reaſons our Author gave*, p. 28. To which I as gravely anſwer, That the contrary is to me very clear, from the Arguments already offer'd. And in order to

judge of it, I only desire the Reader to examine the Places refer'd to in *The Plea for Revelation*, before the Answers here made to them; upon which Condition I most readily leave the Issue with him. And with all this Gravity, I am so far from disallowing this Gentleman to *be pleasant in his turn*, p. 29. that I assure him, *my Countryman*, is heartily at his Service; and he has all the Licence I can give him, to laugh on which side of his Mouth he pleases.

In p. 31. we come to the Argument against the Doctrine of the Insufficiency of Reason, drawn from its being a supposed Impeachment of the Wisdom and Goodness of God; and here our Author observes, *That I artfully dropped my Reply to the first Part of his Argument*, p. 33. that is, if I understand it, cunningly avoided giving any Answer to it. Whereas I actually did consider it fully, which the Reader would have seen, if this Gentleman had not here given a very partial State of what I said in answer to it; and either there is nothing new in this Re-

ply, or it is ſo difficult to find it out, that I have not time to underſtand it. Unleſs it be, that he plays upon the Meaning of the Word *Sin*, which indeed, abſtractedly conſider'd, is *the Tranſgreſſion of the Law*; but it cannot properly and ſtrictly Speaking be imputed as a Crime to any Man, till this Law is known to him, or he might have known it. The Eſſence of Guilt conſiſts in acting contrary to Knowledge, or to what might have been known to be a Duty; and the Doctrine of the Inſufficiency does not imply Mens being under a Neceſſity of contracting that Guilt; that is, *of Sinning*, in the uſual meaning of the Word, when we ſpeak of it, as an Offence againſt the Laws of God, for which his Juſtice calls for Vengeance. And ſince this Gentleman is ſo much *at a Loſs to vindicate the Divine Wiſdom and Goodneſs, on Suppoſition that Men are placed by God's Providence in ſuch Circumſtances* as not to be able of themſelves *to know all Moral Duties, and entitle themſelves to perfect Happineſs*, which is my Lord Biſhop of *London*'s Suppoſition; I will

for

for once tell him, how *to remove that Difficulty*, p. 35. Let him account with himſelf, for God's permitting of Evil in the World, either moral or natural; or let him impartially enquire, whether God is obliged to make all his Creatures *equally capable* of Happineſs, and of the *ſame Degrees* of it; and the ſame Anſwers and Solutions will ſerve for that great Stumbling-block, of his ſuffering the Heathen to live under an inſufficient Guide.

The Anſwer to the next Reaſon I offered is dark in itſelf, and very little, if at all, to the Purpoſe. I argued from an Hypotheſis built on a Paſſage of Scripture, (*Rom.* i. 21—28.) and the Reply labours to ſhew ſome fancied ill Conſequences of that Hypotheſis: Which will by no Means deſtroy it; unleſs it can be ſhewn, that the Text on which it is founded, is miſunderſtood, or miſapplied. And here it unluckily happens, that this Gentleman has interpreted it in the very ſame Senſe in which I urged it. He ſays, the Senſe of God's *giving up Men* in Scripture,

Scripture, is his *permitting them to go on willfully in their wicked Ways*, p. 41. very well. And what have I ſaid to contradict it? Why, I ſay, in the Apoſtle's own Words, That *God gave them up to Uncleanneſs and to vile Affections*, (*Plea for Div. Revelat.* p. 26.) and I ſay no more. But for what Reaſon did God do this? I anſwer again in St. *Paul*'s Words, *Becauſe when they knew God* (not when they *did not* know him) *they did not glorify him as God*, &c. How then comes this Text to be *ſo directly againſt my Lord of* London *and myſelf*, p. 42? I did not add the Epithet *ſufficient* to Knowledge, in an ambiguous Senſe, becauſe the Apoſtle had left it out; and there lies the Grievance. And I am repreſented as arguing that God puniſh'd the Heathen *becauſe they* DID NOT *know him*, when I aſſert, in the Apoſtle's own Words that *they did*. The whole Artifice, or Miſtake, which ever it is, lies in the Ambiguity of the Word *ſufficient*; as if I had denied them ſufficient Light to have known the *Divine Power and Godhead* which the

Apoſtle

Apoſtle aſſerts, (and which is all he aſſerts of it,) though I uſe *his own Words only:* And that for this ſpecial Reaſon, Becauſe I do deny them to have had ſufficient Light to inſtruct them *in all the Parts of their Duty, and other religious Matters*, which the Apoſtle *does not aſſert*, but rather, in other Places, the contrary. And indeed, I can as yet ſee no Reaſon but to conclude from this very Text of the *Romans*, that the Continuance of the Heathen whom the Apoſtle mentions, in that State of Ignorance and Barbarity, was, on the part of God, punitive and judicial. And when our Author has learnt the Difference between ſufficient Light *to know ſome Things*, and ſufficient Light *to know all Things*; he will find that *he has little conſidered or underſtood the Senſe of the Apoſtle as interpreted by himſelf.*

And an Attention to the like Diſtinction would have prevented the wiſe Reaſoning in the next Page, 43, from my granting that *Natural Religion may be very clear, and indiſpenſably oblige*, AS FAR AS IT GOES. From which he argues thus; *a clear indiſpenſable*

penſable Obligation of doing Works of Virtue and Piety, without being able to appeaſe God, and attain Happineſs, is a ſtrange Abſurdity; and is as much as to ſay, that ſuch Works of Virtue and Piety are not Works of Virtue and Piety, &c. Whereas if he had conſidered, that to ſay, That Reaſon may clearly diſcover *ſome Things*, and that Men are indiſpenſably obliged to practiſe what they can diſcover, is very different from ſaying, That they can diſcover *all Things neceſſary* to attain to the higheſt Pitch of Virtue and Happineſs; I ſay, if he had conſider'd this, and remember'd that the former was affirmed by one who is contending that Reaſon at beſt cannot go very far; the Abſurdity imputed to me would have vaniſhed, and his own have been prevented.

And much of the like kind, to ſay no worſe, is the following Quotation from Dr. *Clarke*, whom our Author cites, in Proof of his being of Opinion, with this Gentleman, that there is no Part of Morality which *is not clear and evident in natural Religion, and* WHICH WAS NOT

IN FACT *taught among the antient Heathen*, p. 44. Whereas the Dr. in the Paſſage cited, ſays not one Word of what was *clear and evident in Natural Religion*, or of what *was taught among the ancient Heathen*. He is ſpeaking of ſome of thoſe Deiſts among us, *who merely upon Account of their Incredulity, would be thought to be ſtrict Adherers to Reaſon, and ſincere and diligent Enquirers after Truth*, (*Unchan. Obligations*, &c. Sixth Edit. p. 3.); and *who pretend to believe*, all that is mentioned in the Quotation, *only ſo far as 'tis diſcoverable by the Light of Nature, without believing any Divine Revelation*, p. 23. And all that the Dr. here affirms of them is only this; That IF THEY DID INDEED BELIEVE WHAT THEY PRETEND, *they then would have juſt and right Notions of God, and of all the Divine Attributes in every reſpect*. But he is very far from allowing that they *do believe what they pretend*. On the contrary, he thinks there is too much Cauſe to believe, that *there are very few or none ſuch Deiſts as theſe among modern Deniers of Revelation*, for this, among other Reaſons

ſons. Becauſe, *if they were fully convinced of the Obligations of natural Religion, and the Certainty of a future State of Rewards and Puniſhments*, and *yet obſerved at the ſame time*, HOW LITTLE USE MEN GENERALLY ARE ABLE TO MAKE OF THE LIGHT OF REASON TO DISCOVER THE ONE, *or to convince themſelves effectually of the Certainty and Importance of* THE OTHER; *'tis impoſſible but they muſt be ſenſible of the Want of a Revelation*, &c. Ibid. p. 24. So that this Part is very far from being inconſiſtent with what that learned Man has ſaid, of the *Inſufficiency of the Reaſon of the* Heathen, in the Paſſages by me refer'd to; and our Author muſt ſtill allow me to believe, that what he aſſerts in thoſe Paſſages is as true as any other Part of his Book; at leaſt, till he gives me a better Reaſon for the contrary, than that eaſy Confutation of barely calling it his *Error*, p. 47. This Aſſertion is indeed a Conceſſion that this Gentleman is gone off from that great Man's Principles; but will not, I preſume, go very far in leſſening his Character and Reputation.

We come now in p. 47. to the Texts quoted in Proof of the *Sufficiency*, &c. the firſt of which is, *Acts* x. 34, 35. And here our Author's own Interpretation is again confidently aſſerted, as if nothing had been ſaid to the contrary; and no one Argument is pretended to be offer'd againſt the Interpretation I have given of it. Which is indeed a ſure way of making the Diſpute endleſs; but is not ſo much Reaſoning as modern Altercation. All the Notice taken of what was ſaid, is only *to infer from his own Reaſoning*, and to affirm what is moſt notoriouſly falſe, *viz. That I am forced to allow, from this Text*, That the Piety and Virtue *as of Cornelius, ſo of every other virtuous Heathen*, who had lived before the Goſpel Revelation, *would have procured them ſuch Acceptableneſs in the Sight of God, as amounted to a Certainty of their being made happy by him*, p. 48. Whereas nothing can be more notorious, than that I contend the Text can have no ſuch Meaning, even with regard to *Cornelius*; and that for Reaſons, which, I

find, are to our Author, in any other Way than this, unanſwerable.

The chief Reaſon given againſt the Interpretation of *Rom.* ii. 16. is; That *if the receiving the Goſpel was the Condition upon which God promiſes to give Glory, Honour and Peace to every one that worketh good, to the Jew firſt, and alſo to the Gentile,* THE APOSTLE WOULD HAVE SAID ſo. And I would fain know, how he could have ſaid it in plainer Terms, than by limiting the Goſpel of Chriſt conſidered *as the Power of God unto Salvation,* TO EVERY ONE THAT BELIEVETH; that is, by ſhewing the abſolute Neceſſity of embracing it, in order to the Salvation of all thoſe who *could come* at the Knowledge of it: And by not at all conſidering the Caſe of thoſe who *could not* know it, and of whoſe eternal State the Apoſtle determines nothing, tho' our Author knows ſo much. St. *Paul* does indeed affirm, That *as many as have ſinned without the Law, ſhall alſo periſh without the Law,* Rom. ii. 12. but he has no where ſaid, *That as many as repent without the Goſpel, ſhall be ſaved without the Goſpel,*

Goſpel, by that Repentance. On the contrary he is moſt clear in affirming, That *as there is no difference*, in Point of Sin, *between Jew and Gentile*, (iii. 22.) *in that all have ſinned*; ſo there is *no Juſtification* to be had from this Sin, either by the Purifications of the *Moſaic* Law, or the Good-works of the Heathen; but only that, which *we have* FREELY *by the Grace of God through the Redemption that is in Chriſt Jeſus* (iii. 24.) *which is, by the Law of Faith, and not* BY WORKS, ver. 27. He does likewiſe affirm, That the *Power and Godhead* of the Almighty *might have been known* by ſome of the Heathen, without a Revelation, (i. 20); and That they were ſo far *a Law to themſelves*, as to have been ſelf-condemned in many Things that they did, ii. 14. But he does not ſay, That *their Conſciences ſhall accuſe or excuſe them*, in the Day of Judgment, as our Author miſrepreſents him; and as if that conſciouſneſs was the Rule by which they ſhall then be judged. No; the 16th Verſe ought to be connected to the 12th; by which it will appear, that what the Apoſtle there affirms of the Day

Day of Judgment is, That Sinners of all Kinds ſhall be condemned; and in the Parentheſis of the 13th, 14th, and 15th Verſes, he proves from the Conſciouſneſs of the Heathen, that thoſe he ſpeaks of were to be included in that Number; and conſequently That they would all, according to their Demerits, have been included in the Sentence, if *the free Gift unto Juſtification* had not been as general as *the Judgment unto Condemnation*, v. 15. That is, He inſiſts, that every Man's Sin will juſtly condemn him; but is ſo far from inſiſting, that any Man's Repentance will ſave him, or even acquit him, of the Guilt of his Sins; that his conſtant Doctrine is, That as *Death is the Wages of Sin, ſo eternal Life is* THE GIFT *of God, through Jeſus Chriſt our Lord*, vi. 23. Whereas our Author's Reaſon tells him, that what he calls the rational *Piety and Virtue of the Heathen is ſufficient* not only *to make them happy*, but even AS HAPPY, AS THE SAME PIETY AND VIRTUE IN A CHRISTIAN CAN MAKE HIM, BY MAKING HIM ACCEPTABLE TO GOD, p. 48.

p. 48. And indeed, if by this he means, that the Piety and Virtue of *neither* can of themſelves make them happy, the Aſſertion is unqueſtionably true. But his Doctrine of good Works beforemention'd makes it but too probable that his Opinion is, that the Virtue of *either* will do ſo, and that *equally*. Which is entirely rejecting the Chriſtian's *Juſtification by Faith*, on which St. *Paul* ſo much inſiſts in this Epiſtle, as of no weight or moment; and is indeed abſolutely deſtroying the *Neceſſity*, if not the Uſefulneſs of the Chriſtian Diſpenſation. In ſhort, if this Author had beſtow'd half the Pains in reading the Sacred Writers, which he would be thought to have employ'd in the Heathen, he muſt have known, what every ſenſible Chriſtian does know, *viz.* That the Holy Penmen every where determine, That *Salvation is only to be had by the Name of Jeſus*; and That they only are *entitled* to it, who not only live well, but likewiſe *believe in* HIM. But what God will finally determine, concerning the virtuous Heathen,

then, we are no where told. The inſpired Writers leave them to *the uncovenanted Mercies* of God; and in this, every wiſe Chriſtian will follow their Example. That they will be in general mercifully and juſtly dealt with, we may infer from the Divine Attributes; and That, IF *they ſincerely, impartially, and conſtantly, follow the beſt Guide they have, they may and will, find Acceptance with the Father of Mercies,* Pl. Rev. p. 68. we may conclude from his being ſuch. (And I aſcribe not their Acceptance, either *to the Sufficiency of their Guide, or the Merit of their* good Works, *&c.* for this plain Reaſon; Becauſe both are defective, and all Men ſtand in need of Remiſſion; which Remiſſion can be obtained only by the Blood of Chriſt, if the Doctrine of the New Teſtament be true.) But *what* infinite Juſtice and Mercy ſhall decree as juſt and fit, concerning them; and *how far* their Acceptance will reach; whether to *any*, or *what* degree of Happineſs; no Man knoweth, or can know. Neither would it be of any uſe to us, if we could have known it; and

therefore this Knowledge is not given us in the Goſpel; which is graciouſly vouchſafed us, not for Amuſement, but Amendment of Life; not to entertain us with the Solution of uſeleſs Speculations, but to teach and enforce upon us uſeful and neceſſary Truths. But this we know, That if any Man's Sins ſhall be remitted, it will be for the Sake, and thro' the Merits of our bleſſed Lord's Death, who was *the Propitiation for the Sins of the whole World*; 1 John ii. 2. That our Lord himſelf declar'd, that among thoſe *who hear* his Goſpel, *they who believe not ſhall be damned*; and That, on the other hand, the true Believer and faithful Chriſtian, and he alone, is, through his infinite Mercy, by Covenant ENTITLED *to eternal Glory*, and has *the Promiſe* of being made *an Heir of God, and Joint-Heir* of Happineſs *with the Lord Chriſt Jeſus*.

My Interpretations of the other Texts ſtand juſt as I left them; neither diſproved nor weakened, by much Railing; and therefore I ſhall only add, That the heroic Inſtances of Faith ſo much extolled in

in *Heb.* xi. are not Inſtances of *that Faith which Nature teaches*, and which our Author makes *the Subſtance, End*, &c. *of the Law and the Goſpel*, p. 4; but Inſtances of that Faith which Revelation only could teach, and which, in many Caſes, was contrary to reaſonable Expectations, and founded ſolely on the Promiſes of God. And therefore to infer from thence the *Sufficiency of Human Reaſon* without Revelation, is highly abſurd in itſelf, and quite beſides the Divine Writer's Meaning, in that whole Chapter.

As to the Objections againſt my Aſſertion, *That true Religion appears from the* Moſaic *Hiſtory to have been in all Ages and Countries, Matter of expreſs Revelation*, p. 59, taken from the Perſons of *Job* and *Melchiſedeck*; nothing ſurely can be more low and trifling. For what can be plain from any Hiſtory, if the *Moſaic* does not make it plain, That God was pleaſed from the Beginning to reveal himſelf to his faithful Servants, in every Age, and give them Precepts concerning his Worſhip, and their Conduct towards him?

And how is this diſproved, by the Inſtances of *Job* and *Melchiſedeck*; unleſs it appeared, that their Knowledge of God and their Duty was neither given them by immediate Communications from Heaven, nor derived from thoſe, who had ſuch Communications? Whereas *Job* is ſuppoſed, in his Hiſtory, to have had ſuch Intercourſes with God; and the few Circumſtances we have of *Melchiſedeck* ſtrongly imply, that his Knowledge of the true God, and his Appointment to be his Prieſt, muſt have been acquired one of thoſe ways. And as to the *Sabian* and *Magian* Religions, p. 60; I humbly deſire our Author would be pleaſed to aſſign a Chapter or two, in the great Book, to prove, that either their, or any other eſtabliſh'd Religion in the World, was found out by the Reaſon of thoſe who profeſs'd, or taught, or eſtabliſh'd it. Without this, he proves nothing to his Purpoſe; and if he will comply with this Requeſt, I promiſe him, upon the Conditions before mentioned, that I will undertake to prove, on the contrary, That no fixed Re-

ligion in any Nation of the World, appears by any authentick Account to have been ſo invented by any Man, or Body of Men; That all Hiſtories, both Sacred and Prophane, agree to prove, that all the Religions we know any Thing of, have have ever been, more or leſs, Matter of Revelation, or Tradition; That as the *Romans* ſent to *Greece* to fetch theirs, ſo the *Grecian* Philoſophers, with whom this Gentleman would be thought ſo very well acquainted, were themſelves Travellers and Gleaners, and did neither invent thoſe Principles of Religion which they received, nor taught them as the Productions of their Reaſon; but That on the contrary, the general Opinion and Doctrine concerning religious Duties, was that which *Plato*, one of the greateſt of them, profeſſes to have been his, *That all Laws and Conſtitutions about Divine Worſhip were to be had only from the Gods.* De Leg. lib. 6. I will undertake to prove, That the Opinions which thoſe Philoſophers, who depended on their Reaſon in religious Matters, entertained concerning

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the Nature of God, and their own Souls, were either romantick Fancies, metaphyſical Niceties, monſtrous Abſurdities, or very imperfect Hints and Gueſſes. Nay, I will undertake to prove, That for any Man to attempt to ſhew us, from the imperfect, fanciful, and contradictory Sentiments, which they have left behind them in their Writings, that they either did, or could demonſtrate by their Reaſon, a compleat, or even a regular and conſiſtent Scheme of Morality and Religion, much leſs ſuch a one as may be collected from the Holy Scriptures; I ſay, I will undertake to prove, that for any Man ſeriouſly to go about this, is really no better, than in the Words of *Terence*,

Dare operam, ut cum ratione inſaniat.

The next Thing I ſhall take notice of is my Charge on our Author of *calumniating the Church of Chriſt*, which was not founded, either as he falſly repreſents it, p. 69, on his concluding from his Reaſonings, *That the Arguments were ſtronger for the Inſufficiency of the Scripture*

ture under the corrupt State of Chriſtianity, than for the Inſufficiency of Human Reaſon, in the corrupt State of natural Religion; or barely on a *Diſagreement with Tritheiſm*, p. 75; but it was chiefly founded on his unjuſtly charging the Church of Chriſt with teaching that Doctrine which ſhe never taught, in order to build his Concluſions partly upon it. It was founded, not as he pretends, (p. 74.) barely on his aſſerting, *That the Doctrine of three ſupreme Agents was diſputed among Chriſtians*; but on his mentioning that Doctrine in ſuch a manner, as implied it to be as great a Reproach to the Chriſtian Church, as the Heathen Polytheiſm was to them. For without this, the parallel does not hold, and all his Reaſoning falls to the Ground. And what does he now in this *Defence* to acquit himſelf of this Charge? Why, he aſſerts the ſame Thing in plainer Terms, with regard to the Church of *England*; and confidently ſays, That *the Doctrine of Tritheiſm does greatly prevail amongſt us*, p. 75, 76. Pag. 61. and That, what I call the Catholick Doctrine

Doctrine of the Trinity, *has no Pretence to be called a Chriſtian Doctrine, as being fundamentally oppoſite to Scripture, Reaſon, and all Primitive Catholick Antiquity*, &c. p. 74.

In p. 67, our Author comes again to repeat his former Aſſertion, That *Reaſon is a much more ſure and infallible Guide in Matters of Religion, than Senſe in the Affairs of the World*; and to prove that it always was ſo in Fact, *with regard to the generality of Mankind*, p. 67. becauſe now *natural Religion is as capable of Demonſtration as any Propoſitions in the Mathematicks*. Whereas, if he had at all attended to this Diſtinction; That it is one Thing to prove a Thing to be good by Reaſon, *after it is found out*, and a very different Thing *to find it out* by Reaſon; he would not have expoſed himſelf a ſecond time by laying ſo much Streſs on ſo weak an Argument. And therefore, that he may not again forget it, I will beg leave to ſhew him the force of it in this familiar Inſtance. I appeal to himſelf, whether he does not think a *Hottentot*, (or rather

ther ſince he does not like the Country) an *American* Savage, has Reaſon enough to prove a Gun, or a Blunderbuſs to be a uſeful Thing, after he has heard the Noiſe, and ſeen the Effects of it; and at the ſame Time I deſire to aſk him, whether he will pretend to prove from thence that this Savage had therefore Reaſon enough to have invented one, before he ſaw any. The Caſe he will, I preſume, allow to be parallel; and I hope he won't think it ludicrous; ſince I deſign it only to make the ſtronger Impreſſion, that the great Book may not be diſgraced by ſo great an Abſurdity.

In p. 72. I am loudly called upon to prove, that the *Heathen charged their Wickedneſs upon Reaſon itſelf.* What I meant by that Expreſſion is evident from the next Words, *viz. That they contended that their Reaſon taught and approved it.* And that they did ſo contend has been already ſhewn, if this Gentleman will allow the abominable Practices of the Heathen in their Idol-worſhip to have been *wicked.* To which I ſhall only add, the renowned *Plato*'s known

Doctrine (*De Leg.* 5.) of *a Community of Women*; which he contends for as a very *reaſonable* Thing, tho', I take it for granted, this Gentleman will allow it to be a very *wicked* one. Many other Inſtances of the like kind, ſhall be reſerved, till I ſee the Demonſtrations they gave of a clear and entire Syſtem of Morality, that is, *as full and as clear as the Precepts of* the Goſpel-revelation.

And with regard to our Author's having *magnified the Knowledge of the Heathen beyond all due Bounds*, I only deſire the Reader to remember the State of the Queſtion; and then he will moſt clearly and evidently ſee, that all the learned Labour and Pains that are here ſpent for ten Pages together, p. 77—87, is ſo much ſpent in proving the very Thing for which I contend. My Lord of *London* had ſaid, That *the Philoſophers were* UNCERTAIN *about the great Motives of Religion*, and particularly *the Immortality of the Soul*, (Second Paſt. Lett. p. 17.) This our Author denied, affirming, *that all but Atheiſts* AGREED *in this*, and other neceſſary Points of

of Religion. I therefore undertook to prove from his own Quotations, that they really confirmed, what my Lord of *London* had ſaid, and obſerved, that if by *agreeing in* theſe Things, he meant *teaching them ſometimes with ſome degree of Confidence, and at other Times ſpeaking dubiouſly about them*, he was contending only with his own Shadow, or endeavouring to prove what nobody denied; *Plea for Rev.* p. 56. And how does he now diſprove this *Uncertainty* with regard to this Truth in particular, of the Immortality of the Soul? The Iſſue of all his own Quotations, ſuppoſing them to be juſt, is this; That *the Stoicks denied the eternal Duration of it*, p. 80; That *this was alſo the* Ariſtotelian *Notion*, Ibid. That *the Ancients before Tully concurred* only *in the Opinion of the* CONTINUANCE *of the Soul in a future State*, p. 80, 81, and that *Continuance*, is even *here* diſtinguiſhed from what we mean by its Immortality; That *our Author can find nothing in* Epictetus *about a future State*, p. 85; That Marcus Antoninus *ſpeaks unreſolved about it*, (how

unreſolved ſee above, p. 29); and *that as to* Socrates, *who*, according to our Author, *would not ſpeak with too much Aſſurance of his own future happy Condition*, and who *in the immediately preceding Words ſpeaks with ſtill leſs Aſſurance of it*; That, I ſay, *the utmoſt he could ſay of it was, That* IF HE MIGHT BE CONFIDENT OF ANY THING, *he ſhould be confident that he was going to the Gods*, p. 84; whilſt the Stoicks ſuppoſed, *That all created Beings, and the Gods themſelves, would be diſſolved and periſh*, p. 81. This Gentleman alſo allows that the diſputed Paſſage of *Chryſippus* amounts to no more *than a Teſtimony for the* PROBABILITY of a future State; and his own Account of the Stoical Renovation, both ſhews that he does not underſtand the Word Σχῆμα in that Paſſage, when he applies it to the *human Body*, inſtead of the whole State or *Syſtem* of Things of which it is ſpoken; and likewiſe makes it now needleſs, as I before thought it impertinent, *to examine what this Scheme of Things has to do with our Notions of a future State.* For who does not ſee, That a chime-

a chimerical Notion of a State of Things *wherein the Souls of all Men, and all other created Beings, nay even the Gods themſelves ſhall be diſſolved and periſh*; I ſay, who does not ſee, That ſuch extravagant and wild Fancies are as different from our Doctrines of a future State, as Light from Darkneſs? Or, who does not perceive the Abſurdity of quoting a Paſſage wherein *that Scheme* is declared *probable*; in order to prove that the perſon who thought it ſo, concurred in the Belief *of a future State*, in the Senſe in which that Expreſſion is generally uſed? And yet our Author, with great Aſſurance, tells my Lord of *London*, p. 82. That *his Lordſhip now ſees, That the Heathen's Knowledge of a future State comes very near to the Revelation of it in the Scriptures.*

After which, I think, nothing ſhould be added; and therefore I ſhall only juſt mention one particular relating to his Lordſhip, and another to myſelf. The firſt is, That this Gentleman did not underſtand either my Lord of *London*, or my ſelf, p. 88. in relation even to his Lordſhip's

ſhip's Deſign. His Lordſhip, as I contended, proves two Things; *Firſt*, That Reaſon of itſelf *could not*, and *Secondly*, That in point of Fact, it *did not* ſufficiently inſtruct Men in Matters of Religion. The former his Lordſhip proves by ſeveral Arguments; the latter, which is mere Matter of Fact, by the Accounts we have of the ancient and modern Heathen. But our Author confounds them, and thereby creates a Contradiction, p. 88. which is only of his own making, and therefore chargeable only on himſelf.

The laſt Thing relates to what he calls *barefaced Miſrepreſentations*, p. 93, and which, I find, he takes very ill. But whether they are juſt Repreſentations or no, I leave the Reader to judge. The firſt is, my aſking this Queſtion, *whether all that is meant by the Depth of the Riches of the Mercy and Goodneſs of God is, that he was* neceſſitated *to do what he has done for us*; and what I mean by it is plain from p. 64, Pl. for Rev. where I explain our Author's Doctrine concerning Revelation to be, *that it was neceſſary only with reſpect*

reſpect to God, who was obliged to diſplay his Goodneſs in this Manner. The Proof of this is brought from p. 7, of *Pl. for Reaſon*, where this Gentleman expreſly aſſerts, *That Chriſtianity was neceſſary* ONLY *to diſplay the great Mercy and Goodneſs of God*, &c. either therefore, according to this Author, Chriſtianity was *not neceſſary at all*, or it was neceſſary ON GOD'S ACCOUNT, *to diſplay his Goodneſs*, &c. (For that it was not neceſſary *on Man's Account*, in the Opinion of this Gentleman, is evident from his general Doctrine of the *ſufficiency of human Reaſon, to* bring men to perfect Piety and perfect Happineſs *without it*) But he does contend that it was *neceſſary* on ſome Account; and conſequently therefore, on God's; which was evidently all that was meant, by his being *neceſſitated to diſplay his Goodneſs in that Manner.*

The other Inſtance of *barefaced Miſrepreſentation* is my aſking, *whether we are to underſtand no more, by* the Demonſtrations of the Spirit and of Power, *than ſuch Arguments as human Reaſon can give for her Con-*

cluſions reſpecting the ſame Truths; which I plainly oppoſed to our Author's Aſſertion before quoted (*Pl. for Rev.* p. 63,) That *Happineſs and Miſery, Rewards and Puniſhments attend Obedience or Diſobedience to moral Truths*, WITH AS MUCH CERTAINTY DRAWN BY REASON *from the divine Attributes as from* THE EXPRESS ASSURANCE of REVELATION. And it is very plain, that this Gentleman was ſo ſtung with this, That he did not attend to, (if he underſtood) the Meaning of that Scriptural Expreſſion of *the Demonſtration of the Spirit*, &c. For if he had, he muſt have ſeen that the Oppoſition was very juſt, between the Certainty of Truths revealed, and that of ſuch Opinions as are founded only upon Reaſon; and he would have ſeen how different the Scriptural Account of the One is, from that which he has given us of the other. And whether he has proved his *Miſrepreſentations*, or cleared himſelf from the Contradictions ſuppoſed in p. 62, 63. of the *Plea for Revelation*, I freely leave the impartial Reader to judge.

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CONCLUSION.

I need not repeat my Motives to enter into this Debate; the Reader has them already in the firſt Pamphlet. But I muſt repeat my Abhorrence of all Doctrines and Principles, that tend, or appear to me to tend, either to weaken the Foundations or Obligation of moral Duties of any kind; or to impeach, directly or indirectly, the Moral Attributes of our Almighty Creator and Preſerver. The more I reflect, the more I am convinced, that I endeavour to eſtabliſh both on the only ſure and unalterable Baſis, when I derive the Knowledge we have of either, *with abſolute Certainty and Aſſurance*, from thoſe Revelations *only*, which HE has been pleaſed to give us, of himſelf, and of his Will.

It is indeed a melancholy Reflection to conſider, to what length Mens Paſſions and Prepoſſeſſions will carry them, in defence of a favourite Hypotheſis. It is grievous to remark, that Men can ſo far

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be deceived by their own Hearts as to perſuade themſelves, That they are Friends and Lovers of revealed Religion, when they are contending for Principles which plainly and neceſſarily ſap the Foundations upon which it ſtands; That they can join Hands with the profeſſed Enemies of all Revelation, and ſupport thoſe Tenets by which thoſe Enemies labour to deſtroy it, and yet believe that they themſelves are doing it good Service; and That they can, in their own Breaſts be perſuaded that they ſerve Chriſtianity, by contending for the Name, when they, to all Intents and Purpoſes, give up the whole of the Thing. So fallible, ſo weak, ſo inconſiſtent, is Man! So very unſafe, and ſo very uncertain a Guide in itſelf, is his boaſted Faculty, Reaſon!

But melancholly as this Reflection is, it is very plainly and evidently true, in the Inſtance before us. For, if there be any thing at all in Chriſtianity, it muſt be this. That the Son of God died *to redeem Mankind from Sin and Death*; That by his dying for us, *he himſelf has borne our Sins*, IN HIS OWN BODY, *on the Tree*; and That

there is no Remiſſion without his *Blood*, which alone CLEANSETH US FROM ALL SIN. And yet we are told in ſo many Words, that *nothing of this was wanting to make the good Works of the Heathen acceptable to God*; and That our Lord's Death is ONLY A SIGN, *to aſſure us, that God will accept us on our Repentance.*

In anſwer to which, I ſhould refer this Gentleman to his *Catechiſm* for better Information; but I am apprehenſive he would tell me in his Reply, That the *Catechiſm* is *Orthodox*; and I muſt therefore leave him to himſelf.

FINIS.